



*To the most Reverend Fathers in God, William  
Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all  
England and Metropolitan, and John Lord  
Archbishop of York Primate of England and  
Metropolitan.*

JAMES. R.

**M**ost Reverend Fathers in God, We Greet you well. Whereas the bold abuses, and extravagancies of Preachers in the Pulpit, have not only by the experience of former Ages been found to tend to the Dishonour of God, the Scandal of Religion, and Disturbance of the Peace, both of Church and State, but did also (through the Licentiousness of the late Rebellious times) much increase, to the Inflaming, Fomenting, and Heightning of the sad Distempers and Confusions that were then among us: And whereas even at this present (notwithstanding the merciful Providence of God, so signally manifested in Restoring Our Royal Family, and the Lawful Government of these Realms, and putting an end to the great Rebellion, and notwithstanding the pious care and endeavours of Our late Dear Brother, and Our Self ever since, to Govern Our Realms in Peace and Tranquillity) it may justly be feared that in sundry parts of this Realm, there want not men of unquiet and Factious Spirits, who in stead of Preaching the pure Word of God, and building up the People in Faith and Holiness, will (if they be not restrained) make it a great part of their Business to beget in the minds of their Hearers, an evil Opinion of their Governours, by insinuating Fears and Jealousies, to Dispose them to Discontent, and to season them with such unsound and dangerous Principles as may lead them into Disobedience, Schism, and Rebellion: And whereas also sundry young Divines, and Preachers, either out of a Spirit of Contention and Contradiction, or in a vain ostentation of their Learning, take upon them in their Popular Sermons, to handle the deep Points of Gods Eternal Councils and Decrees, or to meddle with the Affairs of State

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and Government, or to wrangle about Forms and Gestures, and other fruitless Disputes and Controversies, serving rather to amuse than profit the Hearers; which is done for the most part, and with the greatest Confidence, by such persons as least understand them: We out of Our Princely Care and Zeal for the Honour of God, the Advancement of Piety, Peace, and true Religion, and for the preventing for the future, as much as lieth in Us, the many and great inconveniencies and mischiefs that will unavoidably ensue, if a timely stop be not given to these and the like growing Abuses, Do, according to the Examples of several of Our Predecessors of Blessed Memory, by these Our special Letters, straitly Charge and Command you, to use your utmost Care and Diligence that these Directions, which upon long and serious Consideration, Our late Dear Brother thought good to give concerning Preachers, \*

\* *Anno 1662.* and which we upon like Considerations have Approved, and caused to be Re-printed, and herewith sent unto you, be from henceforth duly and strictly observed by all the Bishops, and others concerned therein within your Provinces. And to this end Our Will and Pleasure is, That you forthwith send them Copies of these Our Directions, to be by them speedily Communicated to every Parson, Vicar, Curate, Lecturer, and Preacher in every Cathedral, Collegiate, and Parish-Church within their Diocesses: And that you earnestly Require them to imploy their utmost endeavour for the due Observation of the same, whereof We shall expect a strict account, both of you. and every one of them: And these Our Letters shall be your sufficient Warrant, and Discharge in that behalf.

*Given at Our Court at Whitehall the fifth day of March  
1685. In the second Year of Our Reign.*

*By His Majesties Command,*

**SUNDERLAND P.**

*Directions Concerning Preachers.*

**I.** That no Preachers in their Sermons presume to meddle with Matters of State, to Model new Governments, or take upon them to Declare, Limit, or Bound out the Power and Authority of Sovereign Princes, or to State and Determine the Differences between Princes and the People; But that upon all good Occasions they faithfully Instru& the People in their Bounden Duty of Subjection and Obedience to their Governours, Superiour and Subordinate of all sorts, and to the Established Laws according to the Word of God, and the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, as it is contained in the Homilies of Obedience, and the Articles of Religion set forth by publick Authority.

**II.** That they be Admonished not to spend their Time and Study in the Search of Abstruse and Speculative Notions, especially in and about the deep Points of Election and Reprobation, together with the Incomprehensible manner of the Concurrence of Gods free Grace, and Mans free Will, and such other Controversies as depend thereupon: But howsoever that they presume not Positively, and Doctrinally to determine any thing concerning the same.

**III.** That they forbear in their Sermons ordinarily and causelessly to enter upon the Handling of any other Controversies of less Moment and Difficulty: But whensoever they are occasioned by Invitation from the Text they Preach upon, or that in Regard of the Auditory they Preach unto, it may seem Requisite or Expedient so to do; That in such cases they do it with all Modesty, Gravity, and Candour, asserting the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of *England*, from the Cavils and Objections of such as are Adversaries to either, without Bitterness, Railing, Jearing, or other unnecessary or unseemly provocation.

**IV.** That for the more Edifying of the People in Faith and Godliness (the aforesaid abuses laid aside) all Ministers and Preachers in their severall respective Cures, shall not only diligently apply themselves to Catechise the Younger sort, according as in the Book of Common Prayer is appointed; But also shall in their ordinary Sermons Insist chiefly upon Catechetical Doctrines (wherein are contained all the necessary and undoubted Verities of Christian Religion) declaring withal unto their Congregations what Influences such Doctrines ought to have into their Lives and Conversations, and stirring them up Effectually, as well by their Examples as their Doctrines, to the practice of such Religious and Moral Duties, as are the proper Results of the said Doctrines, as Self-denial, Contempt of the World, Humility, Patience, Meekness, Temperance, Justice, Mercy, Obedience, and the like; And to a Detestation and shunning of Sin, especially such Sins as are so rise among us, and common to the Age we Live in; such are those usually Stiled the Seven Deadly ones, in sho t, all kind of Debauchery, Sensuality, Rebellion, Profaneness, Atheism, and the like. And because the late Licentious Times have Corrupted Religion even in the very Roots and Foundations, That where there is an Afternoons Exercise, it be especially Spent either in Explaining some part of the Church-Catechism, or in Preaching upon some such Text of Scripture, as will properly and Naturally lead to the handling of some thing Contained in it, or may Con-



duce to the Exposition of the Liturgy, and Prayers of the Church (as Occasion shall be offered) the onely cause They grew into Contempt amongst the People being this, that They were not Understood. That also the Minister as often as Conveniently he can, Read the Prayers himself; and when he cannot so do, he Procure or Provide some fit Person in Holy Orders, who may do it with that Gravity, Distinctness, Devotion, and Reverence as becomes so Holy an Action: And whensoever by Reason of his Infirmary, or the Concurrence of other Offices, the time may seem too short, or he unable to Perform the Office of both Prayers and Sermon at length, he rather shorten his Discourse or Sermon, then Ommit any thing of the Prayers, lest he Incure the Penalty of the Act for Uniformity, Requiring them to be Read according as the Book Directs.

V. And further Our Will and Pleasure is, That All Ministers within their severall Cures, be Injoynd publickly to Read over unto the People, such Canons as are or shall be in Force at least once, and the Thirty nine Articles twice every Year to the End they may the better understand, and be more throughly Acquainted with the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of *England*, and not so easily drawn away from it as formerly they have been.

VI. Since Preaching was not Anciently the Work of every Priest, but was Restrained to the choicest Persons for Gravity, Prudence, and Learning; The Archbishopps and Bishops of this Kingdom are to take great Care whom they Licence to Preach, and that all Grants and Licences of this kind heretofore made by any Chancellour, Official, Commissary or other Secular Person (who are presumed not to be so Competent Judges in Matters of this Nature) be accounted Void and Null, unless the same shall likewise be allowed by the Archbishop, or the Bishop of the Diocess, and that all Licences of Preachers hereafter to be made or Granted by any Archbishop or Bishop, shall be onely during Pleasure, otherwise to be Void to all Intents and Purposes, as if the same had never been Made nor Granted.

VII. Lastly that for the better Observing of the Lords-Day, too much neglected of late, they shall, as by often and serious Admonitions and sharp Reproofs, endeavour to draw off People from such Idle, Debauched, and Profane Courses as dishonour God, bring a Scandal on Religion, and Contempt on the Laws and Authority Ecclesiastical and Civil, so shall they very earnestly perswade them to frequent Divine Service on the Lords-Day, and other Festivals appointed by the Church to be kept Solemn; And in case any Person shall resort unto any Taverns or Ale-houses, or use any lawful Sports and Exercises on such Days, the Minister shall exhort those which are in Authority in their severall Parishes and Congregations, carefully to look after all such Offenders in any kind whatsoever, together with all those that Abett, Receive or Entertain them, that they may be Proceeded against, according to the Laws, and Quality of their Offences, that all such Disorders may for the Time to come be Prevented.

Given at Our Court at Whitehall, the Fifth Day of March, 1685.  
In the Second Year of Our Reign.

By His Majesties Command.  
Sunderland. P.

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Heir of Andrew Anderson, Printer to the KING'S most Excellent  
MAJESTY, Anno Dom. 1685.



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Sunderland. B. W. 1689.  
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